



**Opening Statement of Rep. Anna G. Eshoo
H.R. 3983, the Gasoline for America's Security (GAS) Act
Committee on Energy and Commerce
September 28, 2005**

Mr. Chairman, I have a lot of questions about this bill, and I'm sure many of them could have been answered through legislative hearings. Unfortunately, we have not been given that opportunity.

1) Why are we marking up another energy bill?

Just weeks ago, the President signed into law his comprehensive energy plan, the *Energy Policy Act*.

Even before the *Energy Policy Act* was adopted, Secretary Bodman said that 95% of the President's energy policy had been accomplished through administrative action.

2) Where are the consumer protections? People are paying record high prices at the pump, partly because of the hurricanes. But, we were paying high prices well before the hurricanes hit. I paid nearly \$4 a gallon in my district just two days ago.

Since we're considering a bill on an expedited timeline, shouldn't the bill have something in it to immediately bring consumers more supply and lower prices?

Instead, this bill calls for investigations of gasoline pricing, one of which was essentially authorized in the *Energy Policy Act* a few weeks ago.

3) This bill, in its findings, simply accepts massive increases in gasoline consumption. Where is the demand reduction?

The President of the United States is telling consumers not to drive as much.

In this bill, there's a modest carpooling provision.

Frankly, this won't make a dent in our oil dependence problem. We need conservation, higher efficiency standards, and new energy sources.

4) This bill attacks environmental laws based on claims that environmental regulations are limiting our refining capacity. Where's the evidence?

The limited record we have shows the industry itself chose to limit refining capacity in order to increase profits. Over the last 10 years it closed 30 refineries.

In the one case where there was an application for it took only nine months to issue the necessary permits. The years of “delays” that have been blamed on regulations actually occurred because the company lacked the needed financing and because it decided to change the location of the refinery site.

5) This bill gives DOE even broader authority to waive Clean Air Act requirements for gasoline during supply emergencies. Why is this authority needed?

The *Energy Policy Act* codified existing discretionary authority that allowed the EPA Administrator to waive certain Clean Air Act in emergencies. That authority was exercised immediately after Katrina

6) Is this really the Committee’s response to Katrina?

We have hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the hurricanes.

Vast areas of our country are contaminated by toxic waste and our public health system is straining to meet new demands.

With these needs, the first thing our committee is doing is bringing up a bill to aid the oil and gas industry – an industry that has profited richly over the past two years.

The American people deserve so much better. This bill diminishes the reputation of this Committee, and the Member’s of the Committee really should know what the sponsors of this bill are trying to accomplish.